



A Kansas Wild Flower???



Five years ago I discovered this plant growing in a wooded area on my farm.. Anyway, much to my surprise, while mowing this area (I have several wooded areas that I mow and use for solitude), I discovered this flowering plant. The leaf like structure reminded me of a tulip, except the "leaf" did not bend like a tulip. The flower was nothing like a tulip. Then my brain finally functioned and I thought this is a WILD ORCHID-living in Kansas. I sent a photo to my daughter who wrote her master's thesis on wild orchids. She told me that it was an orchid, and it might be years (maybe never) before I would ever see it again. To date she has been correct. Orchids are an interesting bunch of plants.

For thirty years I had known that Kansas had wild orchids. My cousin, Clifford Walters, a national authority on orchids, had made that statement, and I thought, OK. He said there were over 20,000 species of wild orchids and Kansas had several species. Orchids grow in every location except Antarctica. Orchids are said to be very old, existing with dinosaurs. The seeds are generally microscopic and blow in the wind like lint. Since orchid seeds don't have an endosperm, they must enter a symbiotic relationship with something (like a fungus) to provide necessary nutrients for germination. Germination in some cases can take up to 15 years. The most unusual orchid grows in Australia. It lives entirely underground and must have ants for pollination.

Orchids have been used by Paiute and Shoshone Indians for medicinal purposes in pneumonia.

Today orchids are very popular and easy to find in the stores. These are the orchids which are known as Epiphytic and have aerial roots. When purchased they generally have wood bark in the pots--never dirt. These are the Cattleyas, Phalaenopsis, and Dendrobiums. These are hybrids, generally produced by orchid breeders. They are not the wild orchids noted above.

Wild orchids are all Terrestrial and require dirt. While most wild plants are able to reside in dirt and acquire their nutritional needs directly from dirt, most orchids need a symbiotic relationship with another system to provide them with their required nutrients. Most often a fungus provides this missing nutrient to the orchid.

The first wild orchid in Kansas was discovered in 1877 in which 6 species were reported. Now Kansas has 20 orchid species listed. Hawaii has only three listed species of wild orchids. One is known as Platanters Holochila and is closely related to an orchid native the Aleutians Islands. The state flower of Minnesota is an Orchid--a lady slipper.

The orchid above is a *Galearis Spectabilis* L. Raf. which is common throughout its range (Eastern Kansas to Mass. and south to Tenn.), but only grows in the very NE. part of Kansas. Since my first sighting, I have looked for the orchid every year, but it has not shown itself.

An intellectual is a man who takes more words than necessary to tell more than he knows. D. Eisenhower

Who's This?



This is Helen Schilling. She lived in Tonganoxie and for many years she worked on the Tonganoxie Mirror as a feature reporter. During WWII she served in the United States Coast Guard. She was stationed in Boson. After the WWII she worked for KC White Goods. She was born in Baker, Kansas in

1910. After being in a large tornado, she moved with her family to this area. Probably everyone knew who she was, **but NOW-this is tough!!--**

WHO IS THIS??



This gentleman came to Tonganoxie in 1861 after living in Canada and the mountains of California. He lived NE of Tonganoxie and owned and operated a 900 acre cattle and pig farm. In the 1940-50s Lon Pomroy lived on this place. This one is a

challenge. **You can't ask Roger Shilling or Suzy Ross !!**

"Each generation imagines itself to be more intelligent than the one that went before it, and wiser than the one that comes after it." George Orwell

My kids gave me a coffee cup which says this better. "The older I get, the better I used to be." ed.

TCHS Hostess for 3rd Quarter!!

- July- Betty & Del Englen & Jean & Laurence Hill
- August- Jenny Alden and Colleen & George Anton
- Sept - Ferry & J.W. Evans and Gladys Walters

It's in the Museum Suzy Ross, museum director

Betty Englen has completed indexing all 25 volumes of the TCHS scrap books. The scrapbook project was started in 1981 and is continued today. The indexes will be entered into Past Perfect for easy reference to the books.

The Friends of the Library have donated 22 quilted banners created from local families, organizations, and businesses. One banner, Tonganoxie school volunteers, is currently on display in the museum. It contains 81 local names. The remaining banners have been properly prepared for storage.

Descendants of the Henry Baker family recently visited the museum from out of state. Henry Baker settled in Tonganoxie in 1862! The Bakers intermarried with the Thistlewaites and have a long history in our community. They belonged to the Society of Friends.

Bill Sallee is planning a trip with his grandchildren to the Honey Valley School which he attended in 1954. We have copied a school census showing his name and the names of his brothers for him to take as a souvenir.



"Back In Time"



This attraction was the most popular event of the day. Everyone wanted a ride. The buggy was built by the high school shop.



Kathy Harrell's middle school history club was the most enthusiastic group of the day. They demonstrated chores that kids did in the old days.



Steve & Cindy LaForge, pick'in & grin'in. Outstanding Blue Grass music. THANKS!!!!

Jean Pearson always has an outstanding quilt show. No exception this year!!!



Chairman of The Board Speaks

Jim Stuke

As I mentioned in the last Quarterly Newsletter, a Building Committee has been formed and is exploring **all avenues** to provide additional office space at the Site.

Since the last newsletter there has been considerable interest in purchasing the Tonganoxie Union Pacific Railroad Depot, and moving it to the Site to be used for office space and a museum. The depot is one of the oldest buildings in Tonganoxie. It was built in 1867.

The asking price for the depot and the land where it is now located is \$125,000.00. A bid has been received to move the depot to the Site for \$12,000.00. It is unknown at this time the total cost of other expenses that may be incurred before the depot is operational.

A Train Depot Fact-Finding committee has been formed to gather additional information, and to contact a building inspector or structural engineer to complete a building inspection. The committee members are Perry Walters, Bill Peak, June Hagenbuch, and Lloyd Pearson.

At this time the Building Committee is "on Hold" until a decision is reached regarding the Union Pacific Train Depot.

If you have any suggestions or input we hope that you would share your thoughts with a member of the Train Depot Fact-Finding Committee or one of the TCHS Board of Directors. The directors are George Anton, Lloyd Pearson, Ed Slawson, Jim Stuke and Laurie Walters.

TCHS June Picnic - A Summer Fal-der-al

June 23rd a pot luck picnic was enjoyed by members of TCHS and friends with chili dogs, hot dogs and a local DJ who provided music and a game variation of *Survivor*. Never had so much fun!!!



This is the only time that Lloyd wasn't smiling.



Others receiving certificates of appreciation were Peachez Joles, Bill Peak and Perry Walters.

Is this a type of Survival Football or what??



It was rather warm to start this event, but soon the sun was down and it was an excellent night for food and fun. You should have been there!!

New Members for 2012

Kim Landers
 Sharon Kay Phenicie
 Floyd Olson
 Paul & Theresa Mast Renewed members
 Ray & Kathy Stockman Billie Aye
 Trish & Leroy Hahn Jim & Earleta Morey
 Eva Vincent
 Roger & Phyllis Shilling
 Chet & Kelli Owens
 Jim & Dee Cannon
 Linda Hancock

Welcome Aboard!!

The Editor's View on TCHS Building Project

Lack of useable space is a serious problem for the Tonganoxie Community Historical Society (here after referred to as "The Historical Society"). This is a **crucial situation in two prominent areas**.

The **first area** involves **museum artifacts**. All the space available for artifact display is being used. We could store artifacts in that part of the barn where family celebrations are held. This area is not heated or cooled (on a daily basis) so no artifacts sensitive to environmental changes could be stored here. In addition that area is presently rented many times a year which brings us quite a sum of money. Thanks to Connie Putthoff. The trade off would be reduced operating funds and because the barn is not heated or cooled only things which were designed to be resistant to climate variation could be stored and viewed here. Most of our artifacts are sensitive to climate which means the Knox-Fairchild dairy barn has to be used and it is already heavily used.

Because most of the items donated to us require climate control, that means we need to work for additional useable space; space that can easily be rodent proof and climate controlled. Items that families have donated to us for safe keeping, safe display, and to be preserved for posterity need areas of special care and storage.

The **second area** which needs attention and many would say this problem may be the most significant is work/administrative space--an area which needs the highest priority. **The Historical Society needs more administrative/work space.**

IMAGINE a small galley style kitchen with 4 people working with two stoves and three refrigerators, no elbow room, and no cabinets. If you can do that you can see the problem. The "work" area is much smaller than a small galley style kitchen. On Wednesdays you can expect to see 5-6 volunteers working in this area. Because of the small space there can be no efficient work output. Each year more and more items are donated to TCHS and each year our volunteers work harder to try and keep up. But with such a small work space you have to expect efficiency in this work place to be reduced. This causes work flow problems, and that leads to frustration. In a museum efficiency/accuracy in the work area is important. Every item needs accurate paperwork and safe storage. All of these problems will go away with improved work areas and larger climate controlled storage facilities.

It has been known for many years that more space was needed, but **money was the problem**. A few weeks ago a building committee was formed. It has met three times to discuss possible solutions to the problems noted above. Last week it became known that the Union Pacific Depot was for sale. The old depot is sitting vacant. It has been used for several different businesses. The inside of the building displays very few of the original structures of the historic building. With the exception of some wood rot, the outside structures seem original.

A small group of people presented to the last board meeting a desire to have The Historical Society purchase that building for its historical value AND it could serve to solve the problem of increased administrative/work space. A motion was presented but died for lack of a second. A committee has been formed to evaluate all issues involved with this purchase. Again money is the problem.

It is my opinion that we don't have the money to purchase the depot AND begin construction on a new building for the museum. In fact we probably don't have enough money to build at one time, a museum that would solve all of our problems. This means the museum would have to be built in segments. It boils down to this. If we decide to build a new museum, it probably means we won't be able to buy the depot. If we buy the depot we can't build the museum and the depot will have to serve as a workplace, although it is my understanding the the depot would be quite separate from where we now house our artifacts. This may present a storage and logistic problem.

From discussing this situation, it seems to me that several groups of people have formed in response to the depot availability for sale. There may be more groups than listed here.

1. Purchase the depot and have it serve as a work place and have it's historical value at the Site.
2. What ever happens to the depot, it should stay where it is and be restored at its original location.
3. Build the museum and not buy the depot.
4. Buy the depot and move it to the Site and build the museum.

It seems to me that item #4 would be the most ideal and satisfy most people. It would allow for purchase of the old historical depot (satisfying those who want the building for its historical value), and allow a new building for our artifacts to be stored in a safe and climate controlled environment as well as a suitable work place.

However, Item #4 presents a financial problem for the Historical Society, because it is unlikely that we can do both. That is unless the people of Tonganoxie, the Historical Society, the Chamber of Commerce, and the City "Fathers", decide that they all want to keep and preserve this building. If those groups can join together in a very determined and serious manner to help the purchase this depot, both projects may be financially possible.

The President's Message Kathy Peak

Speakers for July, August and Sept.. con't

It's not a secret anymore! Tonganoxie Community Historical Society has often been referred to as the best kept secret in Tonganoxie. Since becoming president it has been my goal to reveal that secret. Tonganoxie is a town with beautiful parks, walking trails, aquatic center, and a strong and vibrant Historical Society. That is something to be proud of. I say: SPREAD THE WORD!

TCHS was formed in 1981 to bring together those interested in the history of our community. Our stated mission is to discover, collect, preserve, display and make accessible to the public any and all objects that reflect the history of our community. Under consideration, as you read this, is the acquisition of the Union Pacific railroad depot located on Main Street. This 1867 depot was an integral part of our community for well over one hundred years. One of the biggest concerns about this acquisition is that it costs too much. YES, it will be expensive to purchase and to move the depot to the historical site. Fortunately, money from the Leighty trust can be used to help defray this expense. Another concern is that it will require too much maintenance. YES, it is a 140 year old building and that will require work to keep it preserved.

All the more reason to make sure the historical society itself becomes a vital part of this community by recruiting new members with the same values as our founding members. Many of our members who have worked tirelessly for many years are now finding it difficult to think about taking on a new project requiring so much time and money. I understand that. It is all the more reason to open our doors and our hearts to new members with the values of our founders: to teach them about the ways of the past and be willing to learn about the ways of the future. It is vital to the society, it is vital to the community, and it is vital to the generations to come.

Speakers for July, August and Sept.

July 24-"*Oceans of Kansas*" with Paleontologist, Michael Everhart go back in time when marine reptiles were larger than dinosaurs. **Bring the kids.**

August 28-"*William Allen White & Heartland Values*" with Fredrick A. Krebs. Understand how White used the platform of the Emporia Gazette to define American Heartland Values.

Sept 25- Roz and Nathan McCommon will perform songs from Roz's album. The McCommons are new members of our community. He is the new City Administer

Some Unusual Burials around Tonganoxie, KS

Bob Fox was a good farmer who lived ca. one mile east of County Rd. 25 and south a few miles from Evans Rd. His father and one of his



brothers were killed in the late 1930's while attempting at night to fill a car with gasoline while using a coal oil lamp for light. The lamp caught on fire and they were both burned to

death. Bob took care of his mother and brother after that accident.

I remember Bob Fox as a jovial, quiet person who enjoyed people coming to fish on his place. At least he seemed happy that I and my friends fished on his place. He and Frank Smith, to my thinking, had the best fishing on Stranger Creek. He purchased the farm where he is buried.

The burial site (very near his old house-now missing) is a little unusual since it is located extremely close to the dirt road which passes his farm. The large rock was most likely moved to this place and he lies under it. I could see no name on this large rock to indicate who is there, but there were flowers.

There seem to be two stories why he decided to be buried here. Since the two stories are so divergent, neither of the two stories needs to be discussed.

Some Unusual Burials around Tonganoxie, KS con't

Unknown family of Mormons are buried in the



trees & bushes shown here. I became aware of this place while working with Fred Leimkuhler who had knowledge of this story. I



had forgotten where the location was, but his daughter, Lynn Paul, took me to it. It seems that a group of Mormon were traveling by wagon southwest from Leavenworth on their way to Texas. This

would have been ca. 1845-1846. Six Children died here due to an illness and were buried in this location. There is evidence at the Leavenworth Court house that a Mormon Trail existed here. Apparently there are remnants of wagon ruts in this region. The trail is 1/4 mile from this burial site indicating the people may have been separated from the rest of the group because of the disease (Cholera or Typhoid Fever are good possibilities.).

There are two possibilities here. The Mormon Battalion travelled from Ft. Leavenworth via the Santa Fe trail to San Diego, Ca. It is very possible they travelled in this area. It was not unusual for military personnel to have their wives and sometimes children with them. Children are listed with this group. This would have been 1846 and involved the Mexican War.

However, It is **most likely** that these people who died belonged to a group of Mormons who were led by **Lyman Wight** and were traveling from Wisconsin to Texas. They also came through Leavenworth. This most likely would have been in 1845. Lyman Wight's trip from Wisconsin to Texas took him through Kansas and Indian Territory. It is well known that this group of people suffered hard ship and sickness through out their trip.

Fred contacted the Mormon Church in Salt Lake. A group of Mormons came to this area in the mid 1950's with the thought of taking the

bodies back to Utah to be buried. Fred said when they saw the place and how peaceful it was, they decided to leave them in Leavenworth Co.

It is unlikely that much more will be learned about these people unless there is evidence of an official trip from Salt Lake City to Leavenworth with some type of report by the Mormons.



Thomas Custer, the younger brother of George A. Custer is buried in the National Cemetery at Ft. Leavenworth. **Thomas Custer is one**

of 19 people who has received two Medals of Honor. He entered the Civil war at age 16. He mustered out in 1864. He rejoined the army and was commissioned a 2nd Lt. He served the last year of the war with his brother, George. He rose to the rank of Lt. Colonel. At the end of the Civil War is was barely 20.

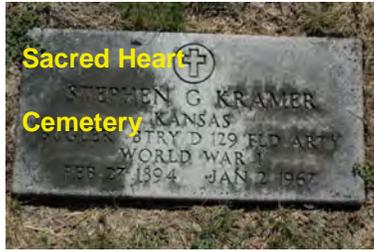
He received his first Medal of Honor on Apr 3, 1865. He made a gallant charge and captured the regimental flag.

His second Medal of Honor was for similar action on Apr 6, 1865. Again he captured a regimental flag. Of course he did other things during these events, like get shot, capture prisoners, and etc.

The capture of a regimental flag was very significant. Communication was not electronic. The battle flag let the unit know which way to go when the battle was difficult. Without that, battle conditions could be worsened by lack of communication.

He was killed on the battle field at The Battle of Little Bighorn with his brothers, George A. Custer and Boston Custer. It was said that the Indian, *Rain-in-the-Face*, cut out his heart, but this proved untrue. He was buried on the battle field, but exhumed one year later, and reburied in Ft. Leavenworth National Cemetery.

Some Unusual Burials around Tonganoxie, KS con't



Stephen G. Kramer, was Harry Truman's bugler during WW I. He grew up in and around Tonganoxie, Kansas. He

entered WW I and was in Co. D 129th Field Artillery, a unit that served in France.



on the south and west. According to George, the area was inhabited by blacks who wanted to avoid public exposure after the Civil War and the anti-black sentiment still alive at that time.

Supposedly they named their settlement, "Little Dixie".

This information comes from conversations I (Roger Shilling) had with George Robb. The Robb family has had property here for a very long time.



Several members of TCHS are looking for information about this town, referred to here as "Little Dixie".

What we think we know.

1. There were several small houses in that area
2. The area was inhabited with black families.
3. Indians may have lived here at some time.
4. Little Tongie Creek would have begun in this valley.

What we know

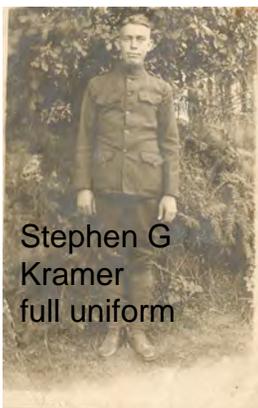
1. There was a home just over the crest of the hill looking east from K-16 Hwy. A road from the highway went east over the crest of the hill. This road was just north of the Robb property. The road dead ended ca. 1/4 mile from the highway where a house was located. I was in that home when Gracie and Merle Reusch lived there.
2. Charlie Miller brought in a number of black families to work in his apple orchard. Some of the black families who worked in that orchard were the Bell family, the King family and very likely the Matthews family. (perhaps some families who worked in that orchard, originated from this settlement).

IF ANYONE HAS ANY INFORMATION ABOUT THIS LOST COMMUNITY AND THE PEOPLE WHO MAY HAVE LIVED THERE, WE WOULD BE EXTREMELY GRATEFUL FOR THAT INFORMATION.

When you appeal to force, there's one thing you must never do--lose. Dwight Eisenhower

His brother was Frank Kramer, Sr. and his nephew is Frank (Junior) Kramer, Jr.

After WW I he returned to this area and farmed with his father and brother. During WW II he worked at the Sunflower Ordinance Plant located near DeSota, Kansas. Sometime after WW II he worked at the St. Mary's College in their dairy operation.



He was said to be very musical. I have seen photos of him playing a violin and a guitar. Plus we know he played a bugle and perhaps a trumpet.



Little Dixie-A LOST TOWN *by Roger Shilling*

Little is known of a settlement nestled in the valley north of Hubble Hill cemetery and west of Leavenworth County fairgrounds. The information that I do have came from talking to George Robb, Bill Robb's father. The Robb property bordered the settlement